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INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 1861
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA 0668
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 2824
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 0002
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0778
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0189
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 7186
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0219
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 KAMPALA 000271

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/ATA, DS/IP/AF, DS/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/05/2029
TAGS: PREL PGOV PHUM KDEM KE UG
SUBJECT: STATE OF COUNTERTERRORISM IN UGANDA

REF: KAMPALA 169

Classified By: Political Officer Samuel Madsen, Reasons 1.4 b,d

¶1. (C) Summary: The Government of Uganda (GoU) is a willing
partner in the fight against terrorism and an important
member of the East African Regional Security Initiative
(EARSI). Uganda is responsive when terrorist threats are
identified, but could improve its capabilities with better
coordination among the various law enforcement and security
agencies. In addition, Uganda's basic law enforcement
capabilities remain weak (Ref A). Ugandan law enforcement
and security agencies could benefit from additional training
and assistance. However, credible past allegations of the
GOU's use of anti-terror organs to intimidate, harass, and
torture perceived political opponents have previously limited
our ability to train some personnel engaged in
counter-terrorism. The GOU should be encouraged to establish
a tough legal regime and rule of law, curb corruption, and
stop human rights abuses, which would provide a strong
foundation for counterterrorism efforts. End Summary.

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BACKGROUND
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¶2. (C) The following assessment is based on the reporting
by a Nairobi-based officer from the State Department's Office
of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT) East Africa
Regional Strategic Initiative (EARSI) who visited Kampala,
Uganda, from 27-29 January for meetings with mission officers
and host country officials involved in counterterrorism.
During these meetings, the participants offered their
opinions regarding the threat of terrorism in Uganda, the
ability of the GoU to conduct counterterrorism operations,
and areas in which additional cooperation and assistance are
needed.

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SECURITY ENVIRONMENT
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¶3. (C) Uganda faces a wide variety of security challenges,
including the threat of violence from both domestic and

transnational extremists. Ugandan security forces have joined
with neighboring countries to confront the violent rebel
group the Lords Resistance Army (LRA) both inside and outside
Uganda's borders. The Ugandan Police Force (UPF) is working
to replace the Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) in
providing security in rural areas from which the LRA has been
displaced. The government also faces a residual threat from
Islamic extremists. While attacks by the Islamic Allied
Democratic Forces (ADF) have ceased, numerous officers stated
that Ugandan territory continues to be used by extremists for
travel, fundraising and other activities to facilitate
terrorist actions in other countries in the region. Security
officers also expressed concern over radicalization among
Ugandans, including efforts to recruit Ugandan citizens for
terrorist attacks in other countries. Related security
concerns include widespread corruption within the law
enforcement and criminal justice systems, trafficking in
persons and money laundering.

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COUNTERTERRORISM AGENCIES
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¶4. (C) Post's Regional Security Officer (RSO) arranged a
meeting for the visiting S/CT coordinator where he was
briefed by the leadership of all of the major Ugandan
counterterrorism agencies that make up the Joint
Anti-Terrorism Task Force (JATT) (Note: The RSO characterized
the JATT as being something like a dysfunctional family -

with the various members coming together only in time of
crisis. He also observed that this meeting was the first
time he had seen the entire group together around one table.
The JATT is named in Post's annual Human Rights Report (HRR)
due to allegations of torture and other acts of intimidation
against perceived regime opponents. End Note.) The
participants provided the following characterization of the
GoU's counterterrorism agencies:

- The Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC). The JIC is the top
level security body in Uganda. The JIC consists of the
chiefs of all of the intelligence and security services.   It
normally meets weekly and on other occasions as needed. The
JIC has tasking authority to various agencies to address
counterterrorism and other security issues.

- The Joint Anti-Terrorism Task Force (JATT). The JATT was
established in 1999 after a rash of improvised explosive
device (IED) attacks illustrated the need for a task force to
identify, track and apprehend the perpetrators. The JATT is
a multi-agency effort. It conducts CT activities at the
Tactical, Operational and Strategic levels.

- The Ugandan Police Force (UPF) Police Anti-Terrorism Unit
(PATU). The UPF is responsible for counterterrorism outreach
and education, with the PATU being its primary CT force. The
PATU,s CT mission emphasizes education and infrastructure
protection. This effort includes counterterrorism awareness
and security education aimed at the public as well as law
enforcement agencies. The PATU monitors and reviews
potential targets for vulnerabilities to terrorist activities
and issues "Be On the Lookout" (BOLO) advisories for
suspected terrorists as needed. The PATU is responsible for
responding to terrorist incidents. This includes conducting
hostage rescue operations and post-incident technical
response. They also protect major public events. Following
a terrorist incident, the UPF/PATU will work under the
direction of the JATT to conduct a post-event investigation.
The PATU is in the process of re-structuring. Besides the
ATPU, the UPF's Criminal Investigations Division (CID)
investigates threats and other suspected terrorist
activities. The UPF also has offices responsible for Border
Control, Customs and Airport Security.

- The Internal Security Organization (ISO). The ISO is
Uganda's domestic intelligence agency, based in the
Presidency. It includes a counterterrorism directorate that
monitors both domestic and transnational extremist groups.
The major focus is on intelligence collection against
suspected terrorists, with actionable intelligence passed to
the JATT. A major challenge for the ISO is monitoring
Somalis residing in Uganda.

- The External Security Organization (ESO). The ESO's
counterterrorism mission predates 9/11. In the
late 1990,s, al-Qaeda operatives located in Sudan sought to
assist rebels of the ADF who were attacking the government of
Uganda. The ESO actively works with Ugandan People's Defense
Force (UPDF) troops assigned to the AMISOM mission in
Somalia. ESO and the GoU also participate in regional CT
initiatives with neighboring countries. The agency recognizes
and supports a broadly based 3D (Diplomacy, Development,
Defense) approach to CT. ESO leaders believe there is a need
for more joint interaction among all agencies in order to
appreciate all aspects of terrorism.

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BILATERAL COOPERATION
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¶5. (C) The U.S. and Uganda cooperate in a number of areas
related to counterterrorism, peace and security:

- U.S. relations with the Ugandan CT organizations are

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generally good. The Embassy works with the Ugandan JATT and
other intelligence and security services sharing intelligence
information, with varying success. Uganda uses the U.S.
supplied Personal Identification and Secure Comparison and
Evaluation System (PICES) program and equipment effectively
at the major ports of entry and authorities have gotten
several hits on suspicious travelers. The PICES system in
Uganda is being upgraded and the government would like to
integrate the system with those of Kenya, Tanzania and other
regional participants.

- The Resident Legal Advisor's (RLA) assistance efforts are
largely directed at countering corruption. However,
Millenium Challenge Coorporation (MCC) funding for this
program runs out at the end of this year. The RLA is working
on assisting prosecutors as well as promoting legislative
reform. There is strong political support in Uganda for law
enforcement training. The RLA's anti-corruption program is
providing training in basic police skills and evidence
collection/processing. The police are also receiving
training in computers and financial fraud. In the past two
months 2000 police have been trained in community policing.

- The ICITAP program is included in Embassy Kampala's
Mission Strategic Plan through 2011. The Embassy has also
requested 1207 funds for police infrastructure improvements.

- Military-to-military ties are good. DOD works with the
UPDF on combating the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and also
provides support to Uganda,s AMISOM force in Somalia. There
is regular intelligence sharing with the UPDF on the LRA and
terrorist groups in Somalia. The U.S. is also providing
maritime security training for the AMISOM force as well as
for UPDF maritime forces on the large lakes that form a
substantial part of Uganda's borders. All rural firearms
crimes fall under the jurisdiction of the UPDF. The populace
generally views the Ugandan military as being effective.

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CAPABILITIES AND NEEDS: SELF-ASSESSMENT
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¶6. (C) Ugandan officials identified a number of areas where

Uganda needs to improve its CT efforts.

- Leaders of the JATT listed the following requirements for
Uganda to be able to properly address CT:

a) Legislation to deal with critical weaknesses in the
Ugandan legal structure.
b) Technical capacity building.
c) Training. Uganda has received some CT training from the
U.S. and other donor nations but it needs more, (most CT
training currently comes from Israel).
d) Equipment. The JATT suffers from critical shortfalls to a
whole range of material requirements, including sidearms,
technical systems, a reliable communications system and
vehicles. The JATT also lacks a headquarters building with
proper technical facilities for investigations, analysis and
C3.

- The PATU chief did not list specific needs but noted a
general need for a wide range of training and equipment. He
also noted the inadequacy of the Ugandan legal system for
dealing with complex crimes.

- The ISO representative stated a need for a searchable
database of known al-Shabaab members.

- The ESO is also in need of training and technical support
in order to improve its CT capabilities.

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CAPABILITIES AND NEEDS: U.S. ASSESSMENT
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¶7. (C) Capability shortfalls and needs identified by U.S.
Mission Kampala personnel:

- There was a broad consensus that the current law
enforcement and legal systems in Uganda are wholly
inadequate. All offices agreed that the Uganda police,
prosecutors and courts lack the laws, procedural training,
technical expertise and material resources to deal with
terrorist or criminal cases effectively.

- Lack of rule of law allows security agencies to use
"terrorism" charges in order to harass, intimidate, and
torture perceived regime opponents.

- Post is limited in its ability to provide training to
senior officers in JATT, CMI, and the Police CT Unit.

- Corruption among the police and courts is widespread and
pervasive. Ugandan citizens have little or no faith in the
effectiveness or impartiality of the judicial system.

- The Ugandan legal system currently has no capacity to track
or combat terrorist financing. There is little political
will to update the applicable laws. Proposed Anti-Money
Laundering legislation is stalled in the parliament.

- There is currently no effective law enforcement forensics
laboratory or evidence storage facility in Uganda.

- The UPDF previously provided security in northern Uganda.
However, after pushing out the LRA guerrillas the military is
withdrawing from the area and turning responsibility for
security over to the police. The police are trying to fill
the vacuum but suffer from a total lack of infrastructure.
Smugglers of various sorts and people traffickers are moving
into the area. The police have no idea how much terrorist
related trafficking might be happening in the area due to
their lack of basic law enforcement skills (such as
developing sources and informants). The police have no
capacity to infiltrate extremist organizations.

- The UPDF has a robust security presence in Uganda's Karamoja area, bringing much needed security infrastructure to the northeastern border region. The police are only now beginning to reestablish a presence throughout this region. When the UPDF begins to draw back its security elements, the law and order sections will be faced with the same challenges they currently face in the post LRA-affected regions.

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COMMENT
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¶8. (C) One of the key themes repeated by many different sources was that extremists continue to operate in Uganda and have the ability to use it for terrorist travel and financing and for facilitating attacks in other countries. Uganda needs to be integrated into regional CT efforts. However, the Ugandan government's counterterrorism agencies face major challenges in seeking to establish an effective counterterrorism regime. There is an urgent need for the various Ugandan government agencies to work together in an integrated fashion on a routine basis, not just when threats arise. The law enforcement and judicial systems are particularly weak. The GoU could benefit greatly from outside assistance such as training for CT personnel and creating the physical and technical infrastructure necessary for an effective CT program. However, the most critical measures are those legal, judicial, and human rights, as well as organizational and policy reforms which must be taken by the Ugandan government itself in order to overcome corruption, inefficiency and human rights abuses and provide the fundamental conditions of rule of law that are necessary

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to defeat extremism.
BROWNING